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Congress of the United States
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COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION
IN EUROPE (U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)

October 15, 2020

The Honorable Charles P. Rettig
Commissioner
Internal Revenue Service
1111 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20224

Dear Commissioner Rettig,

We write today to urge the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to send notification letters as soon as possible to the nearly nine million Americans who may benefit from the extended non-filer registration deadline for Economic Impact Payments (EIPs). We also ask that the IRS broaden its outreach efforts beyond notification letters to ensure non-filers are aware of the steps they must take to receive their EIPs.

My colleagues and I were pleased to learn of the IRS's recent decision to extend the non-filer registration deadline from October 15, 2020 to November 21, 2020. As you'll recall, we sent a letter on September 23, 2020, advocating for this extension, because we believed the IRS had failed to adequately alert non-filers of its deadline. Despite possessing the information needed to contact non-filers for months, the IRS started sending letters to these individuals merely three weeks before the deadline, on September 24, 2020.

We are very concerned that the IRS is making the same mistake again. Although the IRS has pushed back its non-filer EIP registration deadline by five weeks – giving millions of Americans necessary time to submit their information – the IRS currently has no plans to alert non-filers to this change through a new round of notification letters. We fail to understand how extending the deadline will help non-filers if they are not made aware of this update. This is particularly puzzling given the fact that the IRS has the information and resources needed to send these letters. As stated above, the IRS already sent non-filers notification letters – albeit belatedly and with now-outdated information – regarding registering for their EIPs in September.

Furthermore, as my colleagues and I noted in our previous letter, the IRS should employ a number of methods to spread awareness of the need for non-filers to claim the EIPs. These could include, but should not be limited to, sending follow-up letters, calling individuals, and creating a coordinated outreach plan with state-

administered programs such as SNAP (food stamps), Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The IRS should be doing everything in its power to ensure that all Americans, and particularly those with the lowest incomes, receive their EIPs. Thus far, the IRS has stated that it will not directly alert non-filers of its new EIP registration deadline. This decision is unacceptable, especially given that the IRS has so recently sent notification letters to these individuals. This unfortunately follows a troubling pattern at the IRS of inadequate and failed outreach efforts to low-income Americans concerning their EIPs.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

Jesús G. “Chuy” García
Member of Congress

Tom O’Halloran
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

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